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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 490  
By Brooks

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Mrs. Carlotta Stewart Watson on receiving the Steadfastness Award from the Women of Achievement.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly should honor those individuals who through their natural talents and unflagging commitment have achieved excellence in their personal endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Carlotta Stewart Watson is one such outstanding citizen who distinguished herself by serving in the Memphis City Schools for 54 years as a guidance counselor and teacher, and devoting countless hours of her time to community and volunteer work; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Watson proceeded in her quest to better the lives of her community through her work as a teacher and guidance counselor, with a vision to "rebuild the village"; she states that her life's philosophy is "Shackle my feet, but not my brain"; and

WHEREAS, this creative woman's talents are best described by the Ghanaian Adinkra symbol **Wawa Aba**(wah-wah ah-ba), which stands for "hardiness, toughness and

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perseverance"; this means that a keen sense of purpose is not defeated or overcome by difficulties and adversities; and

WHEREAS, at the age of 99, Mrs. Watson was honored as the first recipient of the Comforter Award from the Tennessee Black Heritage Celebration in 1999, for her meritorious service as a pioneer in the Memphis School System and her high energy level and commitment in her work as a community volunteer and for her dedication to uplifting the minds and spirit of young people; and

WHEREAS, she and her devoted students, who span three generations, established the Carlotta Stewart Watson Scholarship Fund for students who are normally overlooked in the school system; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Watson is a longtime resident of the Orange Mound community in Memphis, who volunteers with Radio Station WYPL-FM by reading to the visually impaired, and she also serves as a receptionist for Habitat for Humanity; and

WHEREAS, renowned as a dedicated community activist, Mrs. Watson is also active in the Mt. Pisgah CME Church, and steadfast in her study of the Word of God, and her desire to spread the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Watson was the first director of Mt. Pisgah's Child Care Center from 1974-1984, and served on the board of directors of the church as ombudsperson; and

WHEREAS, in addition to these activities, Mrs. Watson is an exceptionally intelligent and sophisticated woman, having received her masters of Arts degree in guidance and counseling from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor in 1958, before embarking upon an illustrious career in guidance upon her appointment as the first certified school counselor in the Memphis School System in 1959; and

WHEREAS, this tireless champion for righteous causes ultimately retired from Booker T. Washington High School as Director of Guidance after her 54th year of outstanding service; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Watson is a beacon of light for seniors who seek to experience the true joy of living; and

WHEREAS, born on October 10th, 1900, she never grows old because she exemplifies the concept of being "young at heart"; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Watson's dedication to excellence is clearly deserving of the respect, admiration, and commendation of this legislative body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we hereby honor Mrs. Carlotta Stewart Watson for her outstanding contributions on behalf of Tennessee's children, congratulate her on receiving the Women of Achievement Steadfastness Award, and wish her much continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.